



## Why Should I Go to Church?

March 12, 2023  
Third Sunday of Lent

### GATHERING AND PRAISE

#### Welcome

#### Prelude

*All Nature Sings!*

English Melody

*The prelude signals the beginning of our sacred time together. During the prelude, you are invited to prepare your heart for worship by focusing your attention upon God.*

#### Call to Worship

Brenda Krens

We wonder if it is important to come to church.

**We come to be in God's holy presence.**

We wonder if worshiping with others matters. We want to know.

**Let us join together with praise on our lips and joy in our hearts!**

#### Opening Prayer

All Praying

Brenda Krens

**God of community, challenge us, surprise us, stretch us as we come together to worship you. May we find that within our shared stories, Your Story is revealed. Amen.**

#### Hymn

*We Are God's People*

FWS 2220

View last page for words

#### Passing the Peace of Christ

Brenda Krens

Christian worship is filled with profound actions: heads bowed in prayer, arms raised in praise, standing during the singing of hymns, reaching out our hands when make our offerings. One ancient and significant gesture in worship is the passing of the peace. Passing the peace is a tradition rooted in Scripture that embodies our identity as peacemakers and

trains ours hearts, hands, and tongues in the ways of peace. Please turn to those around you and greet them with the peace of Christ by saying, "Peace be with you."

### **Prayer of Confession**

Pastor Debra

**"When we offer God our confession, we join the beautiful work of reconciliation.**

Creator God, we know that we are to enter your gates with thanksgiving, joining with all the earth in shouting for joy and worshiping you with gladness. Yet, we confess that too often we forget it is you who brought us into life and you who continue to sustain us with your goodness. Thinking that we have made it all on our own, we stand alone, above and apart from those with whom you call us into community. Forgive us our foolishness, O Lord. Remind us that we to be found praising you together with our sisters and brothers as sheep of your pasture. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

### **Words of Assurance**

Know that the Lord we serve is a good and gracious God. No matter how far we wander, we will always be God's people, sheep of God's pasture. Let us give thanks for God's steadfast love and faithfulness, which endures forever!

### **Ministry of Music**

*Purified*

Choir

## **PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE**

### **Prayer for Understanding**

*All Praying*

Brenda Krens

**We ask you, our living God, to shower onto us your wisdom and knowledge. We pray that as we listen to your word, we may have the ability to see clearly what you have called us to do. We seek to live to fulfill your words urging us to love others as we love ourselves. Illuminate our eyes and reveal to us your glory. Amen.**

### **Scripture Readings**

Brenda Krens

Psalms 100

Hebrews 10:24-25

Acts 2:42

Acts 9:31

### **Psalm 100**

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

<sup>2</sup> Worship the Lord with gladness;  
come before him with joyful songs.

<sup>3</sup> Know that the Lord is God.

It is he who made us, and we are his<sup>[a]</sup>;  
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

- <sup>4</sup> Enter his gates with thanksgiving  
and his courts with praise;  
give thanks to him and praise his name.
- <sup>5</sup> For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;  
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

**Hebrews 10:24-25.**

*And let us consider together how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another - and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

**Acts 2:42**

*"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."*

**ACTS 9:31**

Another Bible verse about going to church that comes from Acts are these parting words from the story of Paul's early ministry. We see that the early church experienced amazing growth through the Holy Spirit and the faithfulness of the disciples. These early Christians were gathered in selfless worship, giving all that they could for the gospel.

*"So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase."*

**Sermon**

*Why Should I Go to Church?*

Pastor Debra

1 Blest be the tie that binds  
our hearts in Christian love;  
the fellowship of kindred minds  
is like to that above.

2 Before our Father's throne  
we pour our ardent prayers;  
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,  
our comforts and our cares.

**Preparation for Prayer**

*Blest Be the Tie That Binds*

UMH 557

**Morning Prayer**

Pastor Debra

### The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

### Offertory Invitation

Brenda Krens

Just as we can worship and experience God more deeply together than we can alone, so can our combined gifts make a greater impact in and for God's world. So, give today as an act of praise- joyfully and gladly!

### Worship with Our Tithes and Offerings

*Offertory*

*The Altar of the Heart*

Nordman

*\*Doxology*

*Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow*

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;***

***Praise God, all creatures here below:***

***Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts!***

***Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!***

***Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!***

*\*Prayer of Dedication*

Brenda Krens

Lord, you are good. Your steadfast love endures forever. Your faithfulness endures to all generations. We release our gifts to you today, trusting in your good, steadfast, and faithful love. Thank you for letting us be your church. Help us to keep being your church, the body of Christ in this world, for generations to come. Amen.

## **GOING FORTH TO SERVE**

### HYMN

*Bind Us Together*

FWS 2226

Bind us together, Lord, bind us together  
with cords that cannot be broken.

Bind us together, Lord,  
Bind us together, Lord,  
Bind us together in love.

There is only one God,  
There is only one King;  
There is only one body,

That is why we sing.

Bind us together, Lord, bind us together  
with cords that cannot be broken.

Bind us together, Lord,  
Bind us together, Lord,  
Bind us together in love.

**Benediction**

Pastor Debra

*May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.—Romans 15:5–6*

**Choral Benediction**

*The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve*

*We go to be the hands of Christ,  
to scatter joy like seed and,  
all our days, to cherish life,  
to do the loving deed.*

**Postlude**

*I've Got Peace Like a River*

Spiritual

## ***We Are God's People***

*We are God's people,  
The chosen of the Lord,  
Born of the Spirit,  
Established by the Word.  
Our cornerstone is Christ alone,  
And strong in Christ we stand;  
O let us live transparently  
And walk heart to heart and hand in hand.*

*We are God's loved ones,  
The Bride of Christ, our Lord,  
For we have known it,  
The love of God outpoured.  
Now let us learn how to return the gift  
Of love once given;  
O let us share each joy and care  
And live with a zeal that pleases heaven.*

*We are the body of which the Lord is head,  
Called to obey Christ, now risen from the dead.  
God will surely be a family diverse,  
Yet truly one;  
O let us give our gifts to God  
And so shall God's work on earth be done.*

*We are a temple, the Spirit's dwelling place,  
Formed in great weakness, a cup to hold God's grace.  
We die alone, for on its own  
Each ember loses fire;  
Yet joined in one the flame burns on  
To give warmth and light and to inspire.*